'SISTER', 'SISTER'S SON' AND 'MOTHER'S BROTHER': LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE FOR MATRILINEAL KINSHIP*

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Attested for over 3500 years and extending geographically from the Atlantic Ocean to Northern India and Russia, the Indo-European (IE) family of languages has long been the central field for linguistic investigations. For over a century, comparative linguists have examined the extensive literature available in IE languages, observing correspondences among linguistic forms and establishing genetic relationships among languages. Lexical cognates and grammatical similarities enabled them to reconstruct the proto-language from which related tongues had descended. More than that, the reconstruction of lexical subsystems through linguistic paleontology apparently made it possible to discover proto-culture by means of linguistic evidence.

It would be a mistake to assume that each of the early works of IE linguistic scholarship was based solely on the objective analysis of existing data. The founders of the discipline were motivated by more than scholarly curiosity in their search for the connections between early language and culture. Many began seeking an IE cradle of civilization, hoping to find the parent culture and mother language for the entire human race. Later, having failed in this quest, they embarked instead on the search for Urheimat, the original homeland of the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) people, their forebears. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, much of IE linguistic research was imbued with racism, borrowing from ethnography to 'prove' the superiority of the PIE race, its culture, and its language. James P. Mallory (1973:28-29) points to the happy and unhappy results of such research. He attributes the beginnings of "a more scientific search for the homeland" to Adolphe Pictet's (1877) Les Origines Indo-Européenes, describing it as the "first definitive work" using linguistic paleontology, while observing that the book had an unfortunate impact on future IE studies, for Pictet's equation of the Indo-Europeans with blue-eyed blonds triggered a controversy which continued to rage until World War II.

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Twentieth-century attempts to synthesize the findings of linguists with those of historians, archaeologists, and social anthropologists however, have resulted in fuller pictures of IE protoculture. In addition, post-war researchers have taken a dim view of those V. Gordon Childe (1926) has termed 'the skull measurers,' abandoning the myth of IE racial superiority. The archaeological work of Marija Gimbutas (1973a., 1973b.) seems at last to have substantiated Otto Schrader's(1890) hypothesis that the IE homeland was located in the lower Volga region north of the Black Sea, the home of the 'Kurgan' people.

Gimbutas' work also points to the existence of a distinct 'Old European' culture which was "Indo-Europeanized" as a result of the Kurgan migrations. Her statements about Old European culture have met with considerable resistance, however, because she argues that the culture of the Old Europeans (unlike that of the Indo-Europeans) was quite probably "dominated by the mother" (1974a.:237-38):

> In Old Europe the world of myth was not polarized into female and male as it was among the Indo-European and many other nomadic and pastoral peoples of the steppes. Both principles were manifest side by side. The male divinity in the shape of a young man or a male animal appears to affirm and strengthen the forces of the creative and active female.
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> The central theme in re-enaction of myths obviously was the celebration of the birth of an infant. . . .The male god, the primeval Dionysius, is saturated with a meaning closely related to that of the Great Goddess in her aspect of the Virgin Nature Goddess and Vegetation Goddess. . . The pantheon reflects a society dominated by the mother. The role of woman was not subject to that of a man. . .

As described by Gimbutas' (1974b:293), 'Kurgan culture' differed markedly, with "a patriarchal society, a class system, the existence of small tribal units ruled by powerful chieftains, [and] a predominantly pastoral economy. . ."

Sexism, manifested as a belief in the unchanged and unchanging nature of IE patriarchy, has prevented many linguists from accepting the fact that a distinct Old European culture existed, despite its evident disparity from that of the Indo-Europeans. Thus, Paul Friedrich (1966:17), for instance, dismissed early archaeological findings which argued that the multi-roomed, two-story dwellings of Old Europe were the product of a distinct culture. Friedrich argued the contrary, insisting that both the multichambered houses of Old Europe and the huts of the Indo-Europeans were Indo-European in origin, and asserting that linguistic paleontology was a more reliable criterion for cultural reconstructions than 'artifacts' or 'material traits'. This reasoning enables him to main-

tain that European culture was uniformly patriarchal:

> The house types of the PIE homeland fall sharply into two halves: the small huts just described and the multichambered long houses of Tripolye and Danubian I. Archaeologists generally assume that the Tripolye culture was matrilocal and matrilineal. The particular material traits could perfectly well have meshed with patrilocal extended families; the 'female figurines'--even one per room as in Tripolye--no more prove matrilyny than do ikons of the Virgin Mary.

Though in the same article Friedrich (1966:5) rejects the linguistic etymologies and interpretations of authors who were "indifferent to or ignorant of social anthropology", he refuses to admit archaeological evidence which is uncongenial to his point of view. Like other IE linguists, he admits to his work only the data which confirm the enduring ubiquity of patriarchy, and reinterpreted those. At present, the dominant view of IE culture still holds it to have been patriarchal, with patrifocal religion and an extended patrilineal family, although the existence of a matrifocal Old European culture is for the most part uncontested. The IE scholars of the last decade content themselves with refuting all evidence of a matriarchal substrate in the IE lexicon and culture.

Long a focus of IE studies, reconstructions of PIE kinship terminology largely follow B. Delbrück (1890) in assuming that PIE kinship terminology uniformly reflects IE patriarchy. Marxist scholars (Isachenko 1953, for example) who have argued to the contrary are dismissed, while scholarly controversy centers on Delbrück's classification of PIE kinship as "Omaha". Friedrich (1966:1-5), like Frank Wordick (1975) and Henry Phelps Gates (1971), supports the Omaha hypothesis and, of course, the patriarchal hypothesis:

> . . . PIE kinship was patriarchal, patrilocal, and patrilineal, and with a system of terms and statuses that would now be classed as "Omaha."

Oswald Szemerényi (1977:149-94), likewise spends fifty pages "confronting" scholars who have postulated an original classificatory principle or an Omaha system for IE, but dismisses matriarchy in an aside (194-95).

Resisting the notion that matrilineal kinship may have existed among the Indo-Europeans, scholars exclude some IE kinship terms from their data, labeling them "anomalies" which are residues of culture contact with non-Indo-Europeans. Seldom are they seen as evidence of an earlier matrilineal stage - hence Friedrich's attribution (1966:17) of "certain unique innovations [in Slavic kinship terminology] involving affinal and consanguineal affilia-

tion through women [to] culture contact with a non-Indo-European people."

It is interesting to note that Slavic kinship terminology contains such innovations, since the Slavic Zadruga is cited elsewhere as a survival of the PIE patriarchal 'Grossfamilie', as in Emile Benveniste (1973:165):

> . . .the structure of the family implicit in the vocabulary is that of a patriarchal society, resting on descent in the paternal line and representing the type of 'Grossfamilie' (still observed in Serbia in the nineteenth century) with an ancestor, around whom are grouped the male descendants and their immediate families. . .

If the patriarchal familial structure of the Indo-Europeans was preserved in the extended Slavic families down through the nineteenth-century, the intrusion of terms suggesting "affinal and consanguineal affiliation through women" seems remarkable indeed. Yet such oversights are typical of research on IE kinship terminology which rules out the possibility of a matrilineal substratum: all apparent 'anomalies' are labeled innovations, the result of "culture contact with a non-Indo-European people", or are somehow interpreted as further evidence of patriarchy.

The IE nomenclature of affinal kinship contains no common word signifying "husband" or "wife", and no term denoting the institution of "marriage" itself. Yet the very absence of these etymons, according to Benveniste (1973:193-195), attests to the subordination of the woman to the man in matrimony (in which the man "took a wife"). Although extant IE expressions for marriage are secondary creations derived from verbs meaning "to lead" or "to carry off", he concludes that they designated the husband's power over the wife, whose new legal status was captured by nouns (e.g. matrimonium). By contrast, etymons designating kinship through the husband can be reconstructed, and their existence, in the absence of parallel terms for the wife's relatives, is offered as evidence of patrilocal, exogamous marriage (Benveniste 1973:198-204; Friedrich 1966:10-11). After her absorption into her husband's family, the wife is said to have employed virilateral terms to distinguish her affinal relatives from her own (e.g. *swekuros "husband's father").

Latin, however, seems to offer contradictory evidence. Not only does Latin contain a term for the maternal uncle (avunculus), derived from avus, the Latin reflex of a common term for "grandfather"; Latin nepos, has a double sense, "nephew" and "grandson". The double sense of nepos is paralleled in other languages, for its cognates denote only "grandson" in Indo-Iranian, only "nephew" in Western languages other than Latin. Moreover, evidence gathered

from Latin inscriptions and literature suggests that corresponding Celtic words also referred to the sister's son alone (Benveniste 1973:188-189):

> A study. . . of the sense of nepos in the Latin inscriptions in Brittainy has shown that it always refers to the sister's son; nepos therefore has the same sense as in the corresponding Celtic word nia in Irish and nei in Welsh, which designate the sister's son, while the brother's son in Irish is called mac brather, a descriptive term. Apart from this, there are in Celtic legends traces of a uterine kinship; in the Ogamic inscriptions, filiation is established through the mother. . . . What are we to make of the classical use of nepos?

What has been made of the classical uses of nepos and avunculus is another argument for patriarchy. Given the exogamous structure proposed for IE kinship, cross-cousin marriage, the mother's brother, avunculus, is the son of the sister of EGO's paternal grandfather, avus. Thus a term for the maternal uncle attests to father-son filiation as well as the relation between maternal uncle and nephew. Further the relation between maternal uncle and nephew is termed "sentimental", its warmth intended to temper the severity of the father-son relation under strict patriarchy (Benveniste 1973:189), as was the case among the Romans.

In this argument, Celtic traces of uterine kinship are overlooked even as they are cited, absorbed into the overall argument for the Roman patria potestas whose existence postdated IE antiquity by millennia. In extensions of this kind of reasoning, Robert S. P. Beekes (1976) and Jan Bremmer (1976) object even to Benveniste's implication of an older IE matrilineal phase.

Similar arguments have transformed all anomalies within IE kinship terminologies. Terms which may reflect an older IE matrilineal stage have been reconciled with the much later classical IE patriarchy not only in their etymological development, but in their reinterpreted reconstruction by generations of linguists.

Anomalies appear even in the most cursory examination of terms for immediate blood relatives. For the terms for "mother" and "father", many linguists have advocated an origin in "childish babble", as does Szemerényi (1977:9).

> . . . IE *pətēr and *mātēr do indeed have their basic syllables from the world of the nursery. It can only be ascribed to inexcusable ignorance if even today it is reiterated that *pətēr is the "protector" (and what is *mātēr?).

Others, like Friedrich (1966:8), remain skeptical of attempts to derive terms for parents from childish babble:

> The most widely attested of all the PIE terms is that for "mother", as in Old Irish maithir, Primitive Germanic mo:θer, and Common Slavic mat(i). And the regular constituent phonological elements of the PIE maHte:r are reflected so regularly as to invalidate attempts to derive the term from "childish babble," or at least to push the originating babble far back of the prehistoric time horizon considered here.

Whatever the source of *pətēr, its correct interpretation seems to have excluded biological paternity. The term designated 'father' only in some uncertain mythological and (later) classificatory sense. Benveniste (1973:170-71), admits that *pətēr did not denote kinship in the "strict sense" and speculates that invocational uses of its derivatives in ancient languages may be traced to a common IE mythological use of the name for 'father':

> Now, in this original usage, the relationship of physical parentage is excluded. We are outside kinship in the strict sense, and *pətēr cannot designate 'father' in a personal sense. The passage from one sphere to the other is no easy matter. . . *pətēr was originally a classificatory term. . .

Benveniste goes on to define the 'broad' meaning of IE 'brotherhood', common descent from a mystical father--an argument which will be analyzed below. He does not attribute the absence of a term for physical paternity to the social insignificance of the IE male parent, but to his mythological status as the head of the pantheon, or his mystical status as the progenitor of the entire clan.

If no arguments of equal ingenuity have been advanced to account for the interpretation of *mātēr, it may be because *mātēr had already acquired the sense of biological maternity long before "the prehistoric time horizon" delimiting most IE reconstructions, ca. 3500 BC. The antiquity of its form and sense lends some support to Benveniste's observation (1973:169) that "father and mother, brother and sister do not constitute symmetrical couples in Indo-European".

Yet not everyone would agree that 'brother' and 'sister' were an asymmetrical pair in IE. Both appear to have served as terms of classification before they were adapted as terms denoting consanguinity, for instance. Thus, although Friedrich (1966), Benveniste (1973) and Szemerenyi (1977) may diagree on the proper segmentation of *swesor, they agree that *swesor and *bhrāter indicated membership in a clan or phratry rather than individual kinship or descent from the same biological parents. Only in the forms of the two terms and in scholarly discussions of the relative social significance of male and female syblings is asymmetry observed. *Bhrāter is said to have occupied a place of central importance in the *swe, the extended social group, *swesor to have existed on the periphery, deriving her importance from the group itself.

Benveniste (1973:175-179) attributes one of the Greek terms for 'brother', adelphós (meaning literally 'born of the same womb'), to a non-Indo-European source:

> . . . a special peculiarity of Greek which separates it from other Indo-European languages, the designation of 'brother' by adelphós, which indicates co-uterine fraternity. This is not the only term which designated the 'brother' by reference to the 'mother'. A parallel term of the same meaning is the adjective homagástrios with the doublet ogástor. It would appear that we have here an ancient pointer to a certain preponderance of the woman.

Providing evidence from early Greek mythology which suggests that Hera was "the great goddess", and that there was a "major role developing on the woman," Benveniste still labels both adelphós and adelphē (the feminine form) innovations. He then hypothesizes that Greek kinship evolved from a system of "phratria mystically descended from the same father" to one of consanguinty, thus necessitating parallel terminology, and refers to matrilinear descent as an "aberrant" idea introduced into IE culture and then "brought. . . into line with the primitive norm."

As Benveniste (1973:179) states flatly, "there are no feminine 'phratriai'," but this fact may be readily explained if a natural progression from matriliny to fratriliny is assumed for societies. Benveniste, on the contrary, interprets the Greek meaning of phrātēr as additional proof of IE patriarchy, conjecturing that the Greeks, if not the non-Indo-Europeans, believed in mystical descent from a spiritual father before they noticed biological childbirth, whereupon the culture shifted briefly to matriliny:

> In fact, phrátēr does not mean the consanguineous brother; it is applied to those who are bound by a mystical relationship and consider themselves as descendants of the same father. . .
>
> In light of these facts, *bhrāter denoted a fraternity which was not necessarily consanguineous. The two meanings are distinguished in Greek. Phrátēr was kept for the member of a phratry, and a new term adelphós (literally 'born of the same womb') was coined for 'blood brother'. . .
>
> Henceforward, the two kinds of relationship were. . . polarized by their implicit reference: phrātēr is defined by connexion with the same father, adelphós by connexion with the same mother. Henceforth only the common maternal descent is given as criterion of fraternity.

Such a progression contradicts all that is known about the evolution of "primitive" societies. Furthermore, it ignores the fact that Greek terms for uterine fraternity appear to be related to terms in

Sanskrit, so that adelphós cannot have been coined by the Greeks. W. B. Lockwood (1969:185), who demonstrates that the Sanskrit compound sagárbhyas 'full brother' is a related form, notes that it is possible to relate the Sanskrit verb gárbhas 'to do' to Greek delphús 'womb' (from which adelphós is derived) through regular sound changes; he finds both terms for 'brother' evidence of matriliny in "Indo-European antiquity":

> Gk adelphós (Homer adelpheós). . . has been dissimilated from *hadelpheós. The prefix is IE *sm- 'one'. . . The basic sense of the compound is therefore 'belonging to one womb.' It is a formation of Indo-European antiquity, from a time when society needed a term for 'uterine brothers and sisters,' i.e. not the children of parents, but the children of a specific mother.

Szemerényi (1977:23), dismisses all such arguments in two sentences:

> The semantics of this innovation has given rise to the assumption that the innovation was due to the influence of a matriarchal substratum. But the Greek word no more justifies such an inference than the Lat. couterinus or the Ind. sagárbhya- mentioned above.

Though he neglects to explain this statement, Szemerényi (24-28) provides a lengthy etymology deriving IE *bhrāter from *bhr- ("the normal nil-grade form of *bher- 'carry, take, bring'") and *ātēr 'fire', arguing that this compound denoted "a person who tended the fire, looked after it, and no doubt procured the fuel as well". On its surface, this derivation of *bhrāter seems unrelated to gender, unlike etymologies which derived *bhrāter from *bhar- 'bear, support, foster' (as an agent-noun which described the brother as 'protector' and 'supporter'). But he attributes the semantic shift of the term to the supposition that the fire-bearers must originally have been young males basing his reconstruction of *bhrāter (and later *dhughəter) on his version of IE sex roles:

> This duty was delegated to the young male members of the family, and the term was eventually only used by the young females with reference to the males of their age group.

Despite the great antiquity of IE *swesor 'sister', one which evidently precludes the usual -ter suffix of kinship, it has never been interpreted as evidence of female primacy in Indo-European culture. *Swesor has been segmented as *swe-sor by Benveniste (1973:173-174), derived from *swē, 'the extended family', (a term of social relationship) plus *sor 'woman'; by Szemerényi (1977: 42-29) as *sw-esor, with the reading 'woman of the joint family'. Since IE linguists agree that *swē (or *sū-) may be the earliest expression referring to the IE 'joint family', it seems remarkable

that etymologies deriving *swesor from *swē are taken as further evidence of male supremacy (--as additional proof of the importance of *bhrāter within the extended family group.) But such has certainly been the case, as in the passage from Benveniste:

> It is probable that *-sor is an archaic name for 'woman'. It can be recognized in Iranian in the guise har- in the root of Av. hāiriši 'woman, female'. . . Thus we can identify the two elements of the compound *swe-sor, etymologically 'the feminine person of a social group swe'. *Such a designation puts 'sister' on quite a different plane from 'brother': there is no symmetry between the two terms. The position of the sister is defined by reference to a social unit, the swe, in the bosom of the 'Grossfamilie', where the masculine members have their place.* (Italics added.)

In short, the connection of *bhrāter with the phratry is evidence of his importance, but the etymological connection of *swesor with the *swē is evidence of her comparative insignificance! Likewise, Szemerényi (1977:42) simply regards the compound, deriving from the root *su- "'all that has been born, the kin, the clan', or simply 'the joint family'", as evidence of exogamy and connection with the "age group of the *brother*" (italics added):

> The compound in question is a tatpuruṣa and means 'the woman (member) of the joint family'. The expression was automatically confined to the age-group of the brother, and with it to EGO's direct descendants, because with the parents this kind of relation was ruled by the institution of exogamy, and for the mother there were special expressions anyway.

It is true that the terms for 'daughter' and 'son' do not constitute a parallel pair in IE. Reconstructed variously from an IE root *dheugh- 'to milk' or *dhug- "meal" (see Szemerényi 1977: 20-22 for details), the derivation from the kinship term from the daughter's function as 'milkmaid' has been dismissed by both Friedrich (1966) and Szemerényi (1977), though the latter wishes to derive it from her function as 'the person who prepares a meal'. Linguists seem to be in accord with respect to its antiquity and its considerable phonetic regularity in the nine stocks in which it is represented. More widely attested than the IE term for 'son', *dhughəter had also acquired its present sense at a very early date.

"With the word for 'son'," as Benveniste (1973:191) points out, "we encounter an unexpected problem. For such a close relationship Indo-European languages present a large variety of designations." *Sūnus is attested in seven stocks, but Latin has fīlius, Celtic macc, Hittite uwas, and Armenian ustr. (The Armenian form appears to have been adapted from its word for 'daughter', dustr.) Of at least equal interest is the fact that virtually all term-concepts

for 'son', whatever their form, appear to be related to maternal physiological processes (Friedrich 1966:6-7):

> Following Brugmann (1905), many linguists would agree that swḗnws, perhaps alone of the six primary terms, derives from a verbal root, specifically swḗ-/sew-/sw-, meaning "to give birth"; Sanskrit shows su:te:, "she gives birth," and sutá-h, "son." Also, Hittite has the verb has(s)- "to give birth," the participle of which (haššant-) means "own son" (J. Friedrich 1952:62). These semantic patterns are paralleled in several daughter languages. The Latin word for son is fi:lius (feminine fi:lia). The Slavic word for child is dĕti, which is related to the word for "to suckle, milk" (doiti). The roots of both the Latin and Slavic words, and for several allied notions, go back to PIE dheh-, meaning "to suckle, to be capable of bearing children" (Benveniste 1933:15). In short, the term-concepts for son seem to be related to those for female (maternal) physiological processes.

Friedrich hastens to reassure other scholars that such connections "in no wise demonstrate matriliny or matriarchy" because the "recognition of maternity is a cultural universal" and because the emotional tie betwen mother and son is "often the most dominant emotionally in patrilineal and patriarchal systems." In short, the absence of terms denoting male offspring exclusively is consonant with the patriarchal culture already reconstructed for the Indo-Europeans. Szemerényi (1977:11) goes even further, using the same data to argue that female offspring were of comparatively little importance; hence, the kinship system possessed only female-marked and generic terms for first-order descendants.

> These languages, then, guarantee an IE *sūnú-s, a clear derivative of the verbal root sū- (:Hld. sū-tē "gebiert"), which originally means "offspring" but was later restricted to the sole important offspring, the male. It is noteworthy, in a negative sense, that the word does not exhibit the kinship suffix -ter-.

Szemerényi (42) does, however, connect *sunus etymologically to *swesor through *sū- 'the joint family'. His brilliant analysis of the connection between the two terms resolves the distinction between two of the *seu roots considered distinct by Pokorny (1959):

> If, then, we can regard as established that IE possessed a word *esōr 'woman', the analysis of *swesōr can no longer be based on the segmentation *swe-sōr but must proceed from *sw-esōr. In view of the broad meaning of *swesōr, i. e. 'woman of the joint family', the interpretation of *sw-, that is *sū-, is now also feasible. For 'clan', 'kin' the historical languages use a noun which is mostly derived from a verb

'be born', cf. Gk. γένος, γενέ, Lat. genus, Goth. kuni, etc. It is therefore almost self-evident that sū- is from the verb sū-, still very much alive in Aryan, and the basis of *sūnus 'son' also. But whereas in *sū-nu-s we have a derivative, *sū- is the root itself, that is a root-noun, used with the meaning 'all that has been born, the kin, the clan', or simply 'the joint family'.

Such patterns do not seem indicative of a culture which has been uniformly patriarchal since its inception. Like the relational senses of *pəter and *bhrāter, they are consistent with a gradual shift from a matriarchal culture, such as that described by Gimbutas (1974a. and b.), or with a culture which has absorbed many of its traits.

The primary task of the IE linguist, as noted by Benveniste (1973:13-14), is to demonstrate that words apparently unrelated in form and meaning "are all direct continuations of some original form" by reconciling apparent differences among their senses or forms. Thus, he can reconcile three Latin senses of the form fero:

> (1) fero "to carry" in the sense of gestation. . . , (2) fero "carry" in the sense of "bring about, involve, entail" is used with reference to manifestations of chance, hence fors, fortuna and their numerous derivatives, which also include the notion of "fortune, riches"; (3) fero "carry" in the sense of "carry off". . . can be defined as referring to seizure and booty.

and is further able to relate the Latin derivatives with bhartr- 'husband', derived from bhar- in Sanskrit, because he sees a husband as one who 'supports' a woman. Hence, he groups them together, because in his view, "they constitute a coherent lexical unit hinging on a central notion."

Benveniste's reconstruction of an original sense for IE *bher- on the basis of its Latin and Sanskrit derivatives evinces as much ingenuity as study. Though the Sanskrit form resembles the Latin, a linguist ignorant of IE culture might assign them to distinct PIE roots, as has been done with other forms whose senses seemed irreconcilable. Certainly, in the millennia which elapsed between the appearance of PIE roots and the records of its derivatives in various daughter languages, each root has ample time to undergo shifts in form and sense. If Benveniste readily associated Sanskrit bhartr- with *bher- -- a root whose primary sense is 'carry' -- perhaps that is because the notion of 'husband' readily suggests 'provider' to him.

A method of reconciling the distinct meanings of terms in related languages is indispensable to linguistic paleontology.

However, the technique may be applied selectively, thus connecting some roots while splitting others into distinct sources, because certain semantic connections do not suggest a central notion to linguists who have preconceived notions about IE culture. IE culture has been presumed to have been uniformly patriarchal; as a result, favored interpretations of linguistic data have tended to bolster that view. The same data, examined within a different framework, might suggest other interpretations--indeed, they might answer the question dismissed by Szemerényi - "and what is *māter?".

The American Heritage Dictionary (1969) section of Indo-European roots, by Calvert Watkins, based on Pokorny (1959), separates two *magh- roots. *Magh-[1] (Pokorny magh- 695), meaning 'to be able', is associated with notions of 'power' or 'might'; from it are derived OE magan, 'to be able', (ModE may), and miht, 'power', (ModE might), Old Persian magus, 'member of a priestly caste' (from 'mighty one'), and magi and magic. *Magh-[2] (Pokorny magh- 697) 'to fight', appears in Old Iranian *ha-maz-an, 'the warrior', from which it was borrowed into Greek as Amazon. The connection between the two *magh- roots should be apparent: the two forms are identical, and the association of'strength' or 'power' with 'fighting' should be obvious. The Indo-Europeans were a war-like people: their weapons, and terms denoting them ('ax') and the warrior caste have survived; moreover, IE languages are spoken across a wide geographical area, suggesting that competing cultures and the languages they spoke were eradicated or confined to isolated areas. The only plausible explanation for arguing that PIE contained two disparate roots, *magh-[1] and *magh-[2], is a failure or an unwillingness to reconcile Amazon, a term for a woman warrior, with verbs denoting 'power'. Such evidence supports other data pointing to the existence of Amazons: the fact that the Irish, well up into recorded history, sent their young men to north Britain to be trained by Amazon warriors (Markale, 1975:38); the existence of OE compounds referring to female warriors, e.g. māegden hēap 'band of female warriors', and gūðcwene 'female warrior' and of the Germanic compound, *maht-hildis, a feminine name meaning 'mighty in battle'.

Possible links among the *ma- roots have been similarly obscured. *Ma-[1] (Pokorny 2, 693) is recorded with the sense of 'good'; derivative senses include 'occurring at a good moment', 'seasonable', 'early'. These extensions account for Latin Mātūta, Goddess of the dawn, from which matins has been derived. *Ma-[2] (Pokorny 3, 694) the probable source of the kinship term *māter on the other hand, is defined as in Szemerényi (1977)--"an imitative root derived from the child's cry for the breast" (hence, Latin mamma 'breast'), yet "probably" connected to Greek Maia, "a respectful form of address to old women." (Connections with Sanskrit māyā, the origin of the material world, are not mentioned by Watkins.) *Ma-[3] (Pokorny ma-no- 699), meaning 'damp', has not been related to other *ma- roots, because the notion central to dampness, mother's breast, and

the primal mother is not evident if interpretations of data are restricted to reconstructions of IE patriarchy.

Those who have argued that evidence for matriarchy or matriliny is present in the IE kinship system and its descendants are termed "matriarchalists" by Wordick (1975:34). Szemerényi (1977: 158) declares that we must exclude their work from consideration as it represents "the anachronistic endeavors of [those] who, impressed by an early, and obsolete branch of allegedly Marxist anthropology, have set out with the conviction not only that group marriage and matriarchate were the proven older stages in the development of all human societies but also that they were late enough to be reflected to a considerable extent in the IE kinship system." On the other hand, IE linguists who have set out with the conviction that only patriarchy is reflected in the IE kinship system, interpreting all kinship terms in this light, have not been labeled "patriarchalists"; rather, they have felt free to interpret all anomalies as later innovations, resulting from the temporary intrusion (not the assimilation) of non-Indo-European cultural and linguistic norms.

A re-evaluation of all IE kinship and relational terms seems to be in order, perhaps one proceeding from a pairing of corresponding male and female terms, or from roots previously considered homophonous but semantically distinct. Results of such research may well substantiate any of the following hypotheses, many of which have been suggested here:

(1) IE kinship terms reflect the absorption of the Old European culture into IE culture;
(2) IE kinship terminologies contain relics of an earlier PIE matriarchate;
(3) IE kinship terms were in fact derived by affixation from verbs or other nouns, using the highly productive suffix of kinship, -ter;
(4) *Swesor and *sūnus may be construed as the earliest kinship terms because they lack the suffix, and reflect a non-patriarchal family and clan structure;
(5) IE male kinship terms may have developed from terms which originally denoted female roles and functions (as did *sūnus in its shift from 'suckling' to 'son').

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